

Columbian issues with perfin? How many of them are there?

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On page vi in the new *Catalogue of United States Perfins*, editor John Randall refers to a Columbian perfin cover that he recollected seeing with a 5¢ Columbian. In discussing that cover with John at the Lexington convention, I seem to remember John telling me that he had turned down the cover either because of cost or a split perfin or both. John's thoughts expressed in the catalogue are that this is a legitimate use.

The cover pictured here corroborates John's thought as it is the same bank mailing the same perfin to the same country—the only differences being that this perfin is not split and it is not a 5¢ but a 3¢ combined with a 2¢ envelope making the correct five cent rate to Central America.

The Columbians, of course, were issued in 1893 in honor of the Columbian Exposition in Chicago celebrating the 400th anniversary of the "discovery" of America by Christopher Columbus. The 16 stamps in the issue were not wildly popular at the time, especially the high values. A number of them are known to



have been still around in 1908 when the first perfins came into use in the United States. The perfins have sometimes been called into question, but it is not unlikely that stamps that remained in office supplies were legitimately perforated and used on company mail.

Although this is an E-rated perfin, I doubt many collectors would pass if this cover were offered to them. With a cancellation date of September 6, 1910, this is not a very early cover but I would think that it may possibly be the lowest Scott's U.S. number on cover.

I would like to know about other Columbian perfins on or off cover. I'll be glad to put together a checklist of these perfins and share it with members through the *Bulletin*. I know attempts have been made to compile a checklist of these issues in the past, but surely an update is long overdue.

Let me know if you have a perfin on a Columbian. Tell me the perfin pattern and the denomination of the stamp if it is off cover. If you have a Columbian on cover, let me know the sender and recipient as well as the postmark. A photograph would be helpful also. My address is always on the back cover.